THE BUSINESS OF

# event planning

Behind-the-Scenes Secrets of Successful Special Events

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# JUDY ALLEN



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#### **Production Credits**

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Printed in Canada 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 This book is dedicated to my mom and dad, Walter and Ruth, to my sister Marilyn and my nieces Natasha and Jasmine, my extended family Hans and Blair, my Aunt Eleanor and Uncle George, my cousin Linda who is in my heart daily, Mykila and Grayson, Uncle Alfred (B), Aunt Dinah, Uncle Alfred (F) and Aunt Rachel, Uncle Rennie and Aunt Gladys, Aunt Lydia, Uncle Arch, Aunt Maria and Uncle Joe, my grandparents Hannah and James Blundon and Emma and Walter Foote, and all my other relatives and friends—both here and departed—who are in my thoughts and prayers more often than they may ever realize. September 11 brought home for all of us the importance and value of family, friends, people we work with and those who make our days a little easier and the meaningfulness of structuring our lives so that we can spend time with those we love and doing what holds significance to us.

This book is also dedicated to all those who I have had the pleasure of working with around the world creating special events. Event planning is truly a team effort and working in this field brings very special people into your lives—business associates, suppliers, clients, guests and those working behind the scenes. Some you will never forget—Rick Sykes, Steve Hughes, Joe Fowler, Mark Merino, Greg Brilhart will always be remembered by those who worked with them.

And to Bernie who reminded me in the middle of setting up an event in Key West to stop for a moment and savor the sunset, Moon who invited me on a sunrise trail ride to see Tucson at its best, John who always demonstrates incredible spirit, Deni, Jayne and David who can make you laugh even in the midst of major setups. To Fran, Carol, Denise and Linda with whom I had the pleasure of working beside around the world—they are the best of the best, and Nina who is an amazing lady who taught me a very valuable lesson.

In event planning, we strive to create memorable events for others and in the process we end up creating wonderful lasting memories for ourselves—if we remember to stop, savor the sunsets and experience the magical moments when the event is swirling live around us.

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### PREFACE

This book is a follow-up to Event Planning: The Ultimate Guide to Successful Meetings, Corporate Events, Fundraising Galas, Conferences, Conventions, Incentives and Other Special Events. Whereas Event Planning is about how to launch a special event successfully (timing, location, menu planning, transportation, decor etc.), this volume covers all the behind-the-scenes considerations that any planner needs to take into account before actually planning the event itself. Event Planning helps readers design a successful event; The Business of Event Planning helps them to be successful in their own special events business, as well as with the events they plan.

Before any thought is even given to the timing or location of the event, before the menus are selected and the decor designed, there are strategic objectives to be determined, proposals to be written, fees and contracts to be negotiated, and safety issues to be considered. *The Business of Event Planning* takes you behind-the-scenes of organizing special events and explains every aspect of the business and the strategy behind successful events. This book will be of value to both the professional event planner and to clients who are hiring and working in partnership with professional planners.

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This book covers all the behind-the-scenes aspects of special events, starting right from the beginning with determining strategic objectives for any event. It follows with client proposals—how they are prepared, what they should include, how they are laid out, and why certain elements will influence client decisions and win planners the business. From a client's perspective, the book will help them understand what exactly the proposal that they hold in their hands is, and how to assess it. The book also covers the psychology and strategic thinking that plays a part in how management fees are determined. There are pros and cons to the various methods of calculating these fees, and each serves a purpose in telling you more about who you will be doing business with, whether from the standpoint of the event planner or the client—and who you should walk away from.

Other strategic and business issues covered include: contractual negotiations, client contracts, and event branding, as well as designing events in multicultural settings or for multicultural guests, which requires heightened sensitivity and awareness when planning meetings, conferences and special events

The event planning principles and procedures that I have designed can be adapted and applied to any kind or size of event in all industries from a multimillion-dollar stage extravaganza to a local school affair. The industry language and content material will change but the planning principles and procedures remain the same. Although the book appears to address only professional event planning companies, that was done for convenience and not meant to exclude everyone else. The solid foundation that is outlined in each chapter of the book provides the blueprint on which to build your event regardless of the field you are in. Both *Event Planning* and *The Business of Event Planning* cross over from corporate events (award presentations, product launches, premieres, conferences, conventions, incentives) to social entertaining (gala fund-raisers, society events, weddings, anniversaries and other personal celebrations) and address the needs of the event planning industry as a whole.

That industry is made up of many facets. What exactly is event planning? Who are event planners? What type of events do they plan? What industries do event planning? Who is hiring? These are questions I am frequently asked by those starting out in the business as well as by experienced event planners looking to change direction, to transfer their planning skills from one area to another or who are looking for hidden event planning niches that match their interests and

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passions. Each is seeking a gold mine of information regarding associations, courses and certification and related industry publications they may not be aware of that can provide direction in the planning field of their choice.

An event has often been defined as an occurrence, a significant gathering or activity that takes place often in a social setting. And planning is the method worked out beforehand for accomplishing an objective. It is a systematic arrangement and assignment of elements or important parts. Event planning is like performing a high-wire act without safety nets. Once your event starts there are no second chances. It is done in one take, and there are no dress rehearsals. You cannot predict how your guests and suppliers will interact and react when you bring them together, but you can plan, prepare and be prepared for the unexpected. Event planning is a creative and challenging undertaking, whether you are staging an event for thousands or a handful of guests. The goal is the same for all event planning—to produce a meaningful and memorable event that meets and exceeds the event objective and to eliminate unexpected expenses and surprises.

Event planning and management covers a wide spectrum from major award presentations such as the Academy Awards, to the intricacies involved in the development, timing and logistics of the next reality TV show, anticipated fashion house launches, or the local school fund-raising drive. Each in its own way is an event to be thought out, planned, managed and produced. Events can be held locally or anywhere in the world, which requires an additional set of planning skills. Out of country events are more complicated because added into the design of the actual event the planner has to factor in the timing and logistics of transporting guests to and from the actual destination. Guests can be departing from one central location or arriving from multiple departure points from around the world.

In the field of event planning you will find professional in-house event planners, event planning companies, freelancers, suppliers and volunteers. In-house event planners are those who are full- or part-time employees of the company they work for. They handle all of their company's event planning requirements internally or may work in partnership with an event planning company and suppliers. Event planning may be their full-time responsibility or just one part of their job description. The responsibilities of in-house event planners may include the coordination of meetings, conferences, conventions, incentives, award presentations, product launches, corporate-sponsored events and other

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marketing endeavors. In-house event planning is done in all industries. It is just as likely for a public relations company to have their own in-house planner to work on their special events, as it is for a car manufacturer, museum, art gallery, or a high-end retail fashion or toy store.

An event planning company or an incentive house is an enterprise that a corporation may contract to handle either a specific project or all of their event planning needs, locally or internationally. These companies may choose to specialize in one area such as large, theatrically staged productions that take place worldwide (car launches and fashion shows), while others may prefer to market themselves as more of a boutique operation, handling only small, exclusive local events. The planning company usually works with the corporate client's designated executive team, in-house event planner and the marketing or human resources department.

Freelancers can work either directly with a corporate client, or for event planning companies, incentive houses and suppliers, which can contract their services on a project basis. They may work on proposal planning, operations or as on-site program directors. Suppliers such as hotels, restaurants, airlines, cruise lines, ground operators, destination management companies, decor companies and caterers all have event planning departments and dedicated staff who work either directly with the corporate client or the planning companies and incentive houses.

Some of the industries that use event planning include:

Administrative	Direct Sales	Nightclub
Professionals	Education	Nonprofit
Arts	Entertainment	Pharmaceutical
Advertising	Fashion	Public Relations
Audiovisual	Film	Publishing
Beauty	Financial	Real Estate
Car Manufacturing	Ground Operators	Restaurants
Churches	Hospitality	Retail
Communications	Hotels	Sports
Computers	Insurance	Staging
Cosmetics	Lighting	Television
Culinary	Magazine	Theatre
Destination	Marketing	Tourism
Management	Medical	Travel
Companies	Music	Wedding

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You will also find a listing of associations and magazines at the back of the Appendix.

Throughout the book we will follow a case study. The Kaleidoscope Corporation (a fictional company) is planning two separate trips to Barbados. One trip is for their senior board of directors and the second will be an incentive trip for their company's top sales force. Barbados has been selected as the destination of choice for both groups for many reasons—the travel time, outstanding facilities, safety, wide range of activities and the company does business on a daily basis with Barbados. Both groups will be staying at the Sandy Lane Hotel, a world premier luxury resort, but the recommended program inclusions and event flow for each group will be different. Each will be geared to their target audience. Both groups will be traveling with their spouses or partners. In the Appendix two proposals—one for a board of directors and the other for an active sales force—are outlined in detail, incorporating strategic event design selections as we move through the chapters. Helen Schur Parris, CEO, Sunlinc Barbados and Sandy Lane Hotel have graciously shared creative content for the land programs. Contact information for Sunlinc Barbados and Sandy Lane Hotel is listed in the Appendix.

In Chapter 1: The Strategic Planning of Event Design, you will also find an example of a six night program and examples of how strategic planning can be applied to create a program that will better meet all the clients external and internal objectives.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Producing a book is similar to producing an event, although the land guage is different-manuscripts, structure edits, copy edits and galleys replace proposals, function sheets and cost summaries—but the key element remains the same. Producing a book takes the combined effort of a team of talented hands who are committed to the end result being the best it can be. Some are known to me by name—at John Wiley and Sons, Karen Milner, Executive Editor, has guided and directed both books into being. Elizabeth McCurdy, Production Manager and Abigail Brown, Production Coordinator, have been and continue to be a valuable part of the process and always there to answer questions, Deanne Rodrigue, Marketing Manager and Meghan Brousseau, Publicity Manager are a delight to work with and Lucas Wilk, Publicity Assistant is always there if I need him. Sandy Siegle, Director of Sales and Parisa Michailidis, Special Sales Representative stand at the ready to handle special sales once a book is launched. Others at John Wiley and Sons I may not know personally, but I appreciate and value their contributions greatly. I thank all of you for making this book a reality.

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On a personal level, I would also like to thank Niran and Siva for all their help.

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# THE STRATEGIC PLANNING OF EVENT DESIGN

There is a specific rhythm or flow that must be incorporated into event design and there is a reason behind every choice from food to program elements. Subtle tactical action is brought into play as well as strategic thinking. Mastering event design becomes an art form. Planners who apply strategic planning to their event design process have discovered a method that successfully works to elevate event planning to a new level. Strategic planning is one of the secret ingredients that leads to producing outstanding events that meet the expectations of both clients and guests.

Event planners using the psychology of strategic planning are skillfully wrapping their events in subtle layers of event planning elements (known as inclusions) that have been designed to evoke specific responses from attendees. They are staged for effect to accomplish specific goals, which for the event planner is to produce an event that meets all of the client's objectives. A company's objective is what they are looking to achieve by holding an event. Objectives can be internal or external. The client's internal objectives are company mandated. The client's external objectives, which may never be formally verbalized, are clearly visible to event planners who have mastered the art of the psychology of event design.

Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. Behavior can generally be predicted, so creating the right set of conditions can bring about a desired result. For example, in business management classes, students are taught that if they want a meeting to end they merely stand up. The predicable behavior that follows that action is that others in the room will stand up as well. If they want someone to leave their office, they move towards the door and the others will follow. It can be that simple and effective. That sequence of events is played out successfully repeatedly in business offices around the world. It is an automatic response to the action taken.

Of course, those who attended the same training sessions may choose to remain seated to play out their hand, but they would be fully aware that the intended outcome of the act of the person standing up and moving towards the door was a subtle signal that the meeting had come to its conclusion, and it was time to leave.

Strategic event design follows the same principles—there is an intention, an action and a predicable response. This is a valuable tool to use when creating an event to produce the results desired by the client. Events that are strategically designed work with the best interests of the client and their guests in mind at all times. They are built to achieve intended results that will benefit both the client and guest alike.

#### **EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

External objectives are the clients' secret wishes. Were they hoping for a match between the selected destination and what brings them personal pleasure? One company president, who is an avid golfer, only chooses destinations that allow him to indulge in his favorite sport. Planners who have not noticed this have wasted time and money on preparing proposals that will never be selected no matter how perfect the destination may be, unless it also includes great golfing. Another president loved watersports—scuba diving, sailing, water-skiing—so, any inland destination did not stand a chance. One president did not like New Orleans. It is a fabulous destination that is perfect for a bilingual group that is active, fun loving, likes to shop and explore. It was a perfect match for the group's client history and profile but it wasn't a match for the president's tastes. In fact, it wasn't his dislike of the town itself, but the fact that he had a sister who lived there, and he visited her frequently. So, given the choice of a new destination he was not familiar with, it won every time.

Look for the common denominator in past history. It can provide major clues. Some clients have a company policy requiring a minimum of three destinations from three different suppliers. The deck can be stacked against a destination without the event planner being aware if they are not in tune with the questions that need to be asked. Better to present three dynamite destinations that address all—internal and external—objectives and position yourself for their next event as well as the two following that.

The president may not be the final decision maker. If spouses or partners are attending do not underestimate the influence or input that the executive partners will have. Again, look to the past history for clues. Where did they go before? Did they look for prime shopping meccas? Was it the theater or the arts that seemed to beckon? What type of destination did they travel to—city, resort, fun and sun, heritage—and look for the common element in all of them. Some companies go back and forth, alternating between fun and sun one year and history the next. The patterns can tip you off as well as the destinations. Examine carefully if what is being said matches what has been done in the past. Find out if there have been any changes to management and make sure you know who the decision makers are. Make it a point to find out why the past destinations were chosen. What was their appeal? Ask questions.

T I P Never make gender assumptions when it comes to personal pursuits that people are passionate about. A woman—whether she is the official corporate decision maker or spouse/partner—may be the biggest World Wide Wrestling fan or into extreme adventure sports. And a male counterpart could be the one who thinks taking the group to Las Vegas and seeing Céline Dion's new special effects-filled production at Caesars Palace would be the ideal choice for the group—combining gambling and golf with music and a spectacular show.

Think strategically, not only about event design, but in all areas of your business. Strategic design is meaningless if it is focused on the wrong destination. Combining strategic thinking with strategic design leads to producing successful proposals and special events.

#### **INTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of an event planning proposal meeting is for the event planner to come away with a clear understanding of the company objectives as well the event elements, guest demographics, budget and past history. Event planners cannot begin to construct an event without knowing the conditions the foundation is to be built on. The "client" may be the company itself and the event planner may either be in-house, from an event planning company, a supplier (such as in the case of a client working directly with a hotel) or an incentive house.

T I P In the case of a corporate client contracting the services of an event planning company or incentive house to handle their event planning requirements, it is imperative that suppliers recognize the event planning company or incentive house as their "client." All communication takes place directly between the supplier and the company the client has contracted to work on their behalf. The supplier in that case would not be dealing directly with the event planner's client on a day-to-day basis.

The "given" objective to any client will be to produce a quality event within a set budget, and company objectives can include:

- Launching a new product
- Creating a corporate team environment
- Celebrating sales success
- Creating an opportunity for employees to be updated and interface with one another
- Holding a company wide brainstorming session
- Hosting an award presentation celebration

The event planner's role is to create the conditions in which these events will occur under the client's event and budget guidelines. The ways and the means that they are executed successfully is where strategic event design comes in.

How each event element is presented will achieve a different outcome. Take the example of a cocktail reception where guests are

gathered together for a stand-alone reception or presentation or to take part in a predinner event. The components of a basic standard cocktail reception are bar beverages and some sort of food. Optional enhancements to a basic standard cocktail reception could include background music and decor.

The bar drinks can be either dispensed by waitstaff or guests can help themselves at the bar. Food will either be dry snacks; an assortment of hors d'oeuvres passed by waitstaff and perhaps a cheese and fruit display table. Music is usually inoffensive and played quietly in the background. Nondescript floral arrangements may be included (Set out on the registration table or by the cheese and fruit display. However, it is never recommended to have them on the bar as they get in the way.).

We have all attended cocktail receptions that have been set out in this manner. Where early arrivals walk into a room devoid of any animation, stand around holding a drink in hand, looking and feeling awkward until more guests arrive. Guests then stand in tight little clusters, seldom moving from the spot they have staked out in the room until a welcome speech, after which they quickly disperse or the doors open for dinner and they go in and sit down. If they do venture from their spot, it is to go directly to the bar or the cheese table and quickly head back to the spot they vacated before it is filled.

On the event planning excitement scale this type of cocktail party would not even register a one. There is barely a ripple of energy in the room and this is the tone that the event planner has set for the rest of the evening. It becomes a ho hum affair, colorless, forgettable. One of countless others, an energy drainer. The only objective this cocktail reception will have met would be to serve as a gathering place for individuals to kill some time and to hold off hunger pangs before heading home after a short speech or sitting down for dinner.



Guests going to an event after work will be arriving hungry. The basic cocktail rule is to feed guests so that they are not drinking on an empty stomach. They will be able to concentrate on the message that is being delivered during cocktails and/or not sitting down to dinner ravenous.

A step up from the basic cocktail reception is one that has been themed. The same basic elements will be in place but the bar drinks may be a little more exotic, the passed finger food will have a bit more novelty, the decor and floral arrangements may be more colorful and the music more intense. The energy level of the room will have been brightened. The guests' senses are starting to be addressed. Good vibrations will be felt in the room but there still is no movement or true animation in this setting. Guests may begin to move to the beat of the music while standing in place, conversations may move from the mundane—the weather and how busy it has been at the office—to something a little more upbeat in tempo. Guests looking for ways to enter into the conversation especially if they are in an unfamiliar setting or group—can begin commenting on the food or the drinks, a safe topic and a way in which to break the ice. The stress relief felt around the room can actually be tangible. For the most part, guests are still firmly in place in their comfort zones, and intermingling is minimal, but for those who do set forth a means has been created to spark discussion. Guests heading into dinner will be more alert and responsive to the evening's events that are about to unfold. For some event planners accomplishing this—getting the audience warmed up—is where it stops.

This is where strategic event design comes in. Event planners must be skilled in this art, and they must approach the structuring of their cocktail reception with the intensity of a general directing their troops. They are on a mission and that is to turn the cocktail reception into an event element that will bring them one step closer to achieving their objective. To a strategic event designer even a cocktail reception is viewed as an opportunity to do so. Their cocktail receptions may be themed, but know that the theme will be wrapped in purpose—on purpose.

Strategic event planners begin by reviewing the group dynamics, which plays a big part in determining the style of event that is proposed. A cocktail reception designed for high-end stockbrokers or board of directors would be quite different in makeup than one for an active sales force, even if the client's corporate objectives were the same. Strategic event planners know this. The high-end senior executives are more likely to enjoy events where they are pampered with proven activities, whereas the active sales force prefers events that have a more competitive edge and are more adventurous.

The strategic event designer goes into the planning process clear on the client's objectives and the results they want to achieve. They know exactly who the client's intended targeted audience is. They are ready to move into their battle plan and map out their strategic points.

Their first step is looking at the big picture. An event can be a stand-alone or one that takes place over the course of a day or several days, and may be a meeting, conference, convention or incentive. Strategic event designers need to develop their principal plan of action for the event and look at how they can use the event as a vehicle to move them closer to their client's goal. Where a particular event element, such as a cocktail reception, is scheduled to take place is important in determining the event content. A welcome cocktail reception will be structured to produce different results than one that is scheduled to take place later in the week or one that is to act as the prelude to a farewell event. This applies to all event elements. Timing and overall structure play major roles in strategic event design.

Laying what is "known" out on a grid will create the shell from which the strategic event planner begins to work. Known elements are those outlined in the proposal request qualification meeting. The client may have said they would like to have daily meetings as part of their agenda, with a welcome cocktail party and dinner, as well as other program inclusions. The event planner will have been given the basic outline the client would like to see take place. For a seven-night meeting event elements could include:

- Round-trip transfers between the airport and the hotel
- Hotel accommodation
- Welcome room gift
- Welcome reception with a one hour open bar and hot and cold canapés to be followed by dinner with wine
- Private group breakfast daily
- Five full days of meetings with audiovisual, staging and lighting requirements
- One half day meeting to take place on the final day
- Morning and afternoon coffee breaks to consist of beverages and light snacks

- Private group lunch daily—no alcoholic beverages to be served
- One afternoon group recreational activity—team-building—to take place on the final day
- Private group dinner nightly with wine
- Farewell reception with a one hour open bar and canapés to be followed by dinner with wine

Event planners know the itinerary, the budget, the group demographics and dynamics, the client's objectives and the group's past event history. The elements as they are known are laid out on the day-by-day grid, which is then divided into sections (see Appendix for example). Each day has a square for breakfast, morning activities, lunch, afternoon activities, reception, dinner, and evening activities. The known event elements are then penciled into the appropriate section of the grid. For some event planners, it is merely a case of filling in the blanks and moving directly to telephoning suppliers to check availability and rates. What the client will receive is exactly what they requested. Will it meet the objectives? Not necessarily, unless the objectives were to simply move the office environment to another location with a few drinks thrown in. Requesting a half day team-building activity on the final day, however, suggests that team-building and creating company camaraderie is an objective—whether verbalized or not. A planner must be able to read what the program elements are telling them when they are laid out in the grid beyond what has been spoken or formalized in the written event outline.

In this case, the event outline is saying that they want to bring their guests together to relax and talk over dinner (and wine) every night at the end of their business day to create a mood of esprit de corps and fellowship, and to boost morale by including a teambuilding event.



Event inclusions outlined by the client can be read like a book. They can tell an event planner volumes more than is ever said about what a client is truly seeking, but it is a matter of reading between the lines.

Once the grid has been filled in, it becomes a map from which event planners begin to break down the process of how they can achieve all of the client's objectives—the ones they have requested as well as the ones they may not be aware of. For example, the

minute an event planner skilled in strategic event design hears that a client requests a single team-building event at the end of a program, red flags will be going up. In their qualification meeting with their client, they will be able to address the problem of meeting the client's objective of bringing their staff closer together, if the team-building activity is left until the very end of the stay. The time to create a feeling of fellowship and companionship is at the beginning of the program not at the end, because you can use the week to build upon the initial activity.

The strategic event planner must clarify whether the client is really looking for a team-building event or merely one that will leave participants psyched up and ready to return to the work force. The two are very different. If the client is seriously interested in team-building, the strategic event planner can review options with them in the very early planning stages. And in order to best achieve these objectives, the event planner would review timing with them to see if the program format could be changed to allow for a half-day meeting, followed by a team-building activity to take place earlier in the program, one that can be designed around meeting content.

An example of a team-building event that could be tied to meeting content would be an adapted version of Geocaching. This hightech game of hide and seek using global positioning systems (GPS) can be created with the clues tied into new company information or featuring new products. Another creative example, Reel Madness, is a team-building event (generously provided by Helen Schur Parris, CEO, Sunlinc Barbados) that is described in detail in the sample proposal located in the Appendix. The objective is to have the participants come together as a team at the beginning of their program and build upon that bond during the course of their stay.

A grand finale team event can then be incorporated into the program which will act as a means to send the work force back to the office psyched up and ready to go come Monday. Once it has been established with the client whether or not event flexibility can be factored in, the strategic event design process can begin.

Strategic event designers plan events that will achieve their client's objectives. Each aspect of the event elements is looked at with an eye on how they can best contribute to the event's success. Each event element is targeted to address specific areas and each one is layered one on top of the other, leading the event forward and contributing to meeting the event's goals. The grid in the hands of strategic event designers becomes a tool they can use—a

blueprint—on which to lay out the inclusions that will build a successful event.

A strategic event designer uses a grid to map out the event elements and to sketch the event energy. Balancing an event's energy is one of the secrets of producing a successful event and it is an essential component that is often overlooked by planners. The event inclusions must be carefully selected, and the event planner must know exactly when and where to bring each in to obtain maximum effect. Strategic event planners carefully construct and orchestrate their events. They understand the study of cause and effect. The client's intention—to meet their objective—and the actions they can bring into play to create a response that will work towards that goal is the strategic event designer's primary focus.

In the above example, the cocktail receptions, the dinners, and even the coffee breaks can all be designed to foster team spirit. Every activity can play a pivotal role but before development can begin the structure and energy of the event must be reviewed. Budget will limit what you can do and what can be included but it does not factor into event structure and event energy.

An event planner is being brought in for their expertise. If the event planner was to follow their client's outline—without recommending changes or coming up with alternate solutions such as moving the team building event to the front of the week for best results—they are not providing their client with the benefit of their experience. The first question a strategic event designer would ask themselves when reviewing the proposed event is how can I structure everything so that the client's objectives can be met in an environment whereby participants are:

- intermingling and getting to know one another;
- working hard through the day;
- coming away from the meetings with new information;
- learning to come together as a team;
- having the chance to relax at dinner and discuss new ideas and;
- returning to work anxious to put all they have learned to practice?

What event elements need to be in place to be right on target and to make their meeting meaningful and memorable?

Bringing any group together for a week and keeping them together 16 or more hours a day is going to be wearing on anyone,